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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997

Part II Political affairs

Section 4
Outer space affairs

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* The present document contains section 4 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. The complete proposed programme budget will subsequently be issued in final printed form as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/50/6/Rev.1).

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Section 4
Outer space affairs

Overview

4.1 In 1959, when space activities were in their infancy, the General Assembly recognized the need for a mechanism to ensure broad international cooperation in space activities. By its resolution 1472 (XIV) of 12 December 1959, the Assembly established the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and mandated it, *inter alia*, to promote international cooperation in space activities, to organize mutual exchange and dissemination of information on outer space research, to encourage and assist the development of national space programmes and to study the nature of legal problems that might arise from the exploration of outer space. That mandate was reaffirmed by the Assembly in its resolution 1721 (XVI) of 20 December 1961, in which it confirmed its belief that the United Nations should provide a focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. The Assembly requested the Committee, in cooperation with the Secretary-General and making full use of the Secretariat, to maintain close contact with organizations concerned with space activities, as well as to provide for information exchange and assistance in the study of measures for promoting international cooperation in space. Those resolutions, along with the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in 1982, are the basis for activities that have evolved under programme 8, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised (A/47/6/Rev.1).

4.2 Since 1959, the scope and importance of space applications have expanded from a narrow field of science and technology to a wide range of applications that are essential to operational communications, weather forecasting, resource management, prevention and mitigation of disaster, environmental monitoring and other social and economic activities in virtually every country. The rapid expansion in space technology is expected to continue, particularly in the areas of communications and resource management.

4.3 The increasing recognition of the need to monitor and protect the earth and space environment is an area that requires a response from the United Nations, in view of the multiplicity of demands for information and assistance. In response to the request of the General Assembly, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space considers how best it can promote the use of space technology in the implementation of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. As a further indication of that concern, the General Assembly has endorsed the agreement of the Committee that it should request the Commission on Sustainable Development to bring to the attention of its members the valuable role of space technology in implementing sustainable development programmes. Reflecting the growing concern for the protection of the space environment, the Assembly considers that it is essential that Member States pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources on board, with space debris, and other aspects of space debris. As a result, the matter of space debris has been included as an item to be considered by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on a priority basis.

4.4 International cooperation in the use of space technology for development is viewed as an increasingly important part of efforts to promote global peace, security and stability, in all their aspects, in a period of rapid political and economic change. The expansion of space activities and the changing international political environment raises important new political, economic, technological and legal issues that the United Nations will have to address. International cooperation will need to be broadened to ensure that

all countries are able to benefit from new space capabilities for social and economic development and that rapid technological advances do not increase the gap between the rich and the poor.

4.5 In that context, it is anticipated that a third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space may be held during or subsequent to the biennium 1996-1997. The General Assembly has requested the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to conduct a thorough analysis of the issue, which should provide the basis for a decision by the Committee on a recommendation to the Assembly regarding the agenda, funding, venue and organization of such a conference. It is expected that substantial preparatory work will be carried out during 1996-1997, depending on the General Assembly's decision on the matter.

Table 4.1 **Summary by object of expenditure**
(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1992-1993 expenditures*	*1994-1995 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*1996-1997 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	2 745.0	3 375.9	48.1	1.4	3 424.0	372.5	3 796.5
Other staff costs	347.4	—	12.9	—	12.9	1.1	14.0
Consultants and experts	19.3	34.3	—	—	34.3	3.0	37.3
Travel	124.6	95.0	—	—	95.0	8.0	103.0
Contractual services	0.7	—	—	—	—	—	—
General operating expenses	—	—	3.1	—	3.1	0.2	3.3
Supplies and materials	—	5.1	—	—	5.1	0.6	5.7
Equipment	4.8	—	30.2	—	30.2	2.7	32.9
Fellowships, grants, contributions	187.9	446.2	—	—	446.2	38.7	484.9
Total	**3 429.7**	**3 956.5**	**94.3**	**2.3**	**4 050.8**	**426.8**	**4 477.6**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1992-1993 expenditures	*1994-1995 estimates*	*Object of expenditure*	*1996-1997 estimates*
Substantive activities			
Trust Fund for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications			
13.4	—	Other staff costs	—
—	50.5	Consultants and experts	40.0
82.0	56.5	Travel	55.0
2.7	—	Contractual services	—
27.7	—	General operating expenses	—
—	—	Furniture	8.3
—	—	Equipment	13.3
120.1	105.0	Fellowships, grants, contributions	140.0
Total	**245.9**	**212.0**	**256.6**
Total (1) and (2)	**3 675.6**	**4 168.5**	**4 734.2**

Table 4.2 **Post requirements**

Programme: Peaceful uses of outer space

	Established posts		*Temporary posts*				*Total*	
	Regular budget		*Regular budget*		*Extrabudgetary resources*			
	1994-1995	*1996-1997*	*1994-1995*	*1996-1997*	*1994-1995*	*1996-1997*	*1994-1995*	*1996-1997*
Professional category and above								
D-2	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
D-1	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
P-5	2	2	—	—	—	—	2	2
P-4/3	8	8	—	—	—	—	8	8
P-2/1	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Total	13	13	—	—	—	—	13	13
General Service category								
Other levels	6	6	—	—	—	—	6	6
Total	6	6	—	—	—	—	6	6
Grand total	19	19	—	—	—	—	19	19

Programme of work

4.6 The Office for Outer Space Affairs is headed by a Director, who supervises, coordinates and provides support to its two sections, the Committee Services and Research Section and the Space Applications Section, in carrying out its mandated activities.

4.7 Activities carried out under the subprogramme Peaceful uses of outer space during the biennium 1996-1997 would be in implementation of priority issues identified in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised (A/47/6/Rev.1). New goals mandated by the General Assembly and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as a result of recent international developments would also form part of the work programme of the Office.

4.8 The overall resource growth of $94,300, or 2.3 per cent growth, is modest in comparison with the 8.3 per cent growth proposed for the biennium 1994-1995. In that regard, it is recalled that the estimates for 1994-1995 provided for the relocation of the Office to Vienna. The programme was initially considered as part of section 3, Political affairs, and reflected under subsection 3D. Resources for general temporary assistance, overtime and acquisition and replacement of office automation equipment, or part of the growth, were therefore subsumed within the overall requirements for section 3. As responsibility for the programme no longer rests with the Department of Political Affairs, requirements for those items are now proposed under the Office for Outer Space Affairs, through redeployment from the Department of Political Affairs.

Activities

1. *Parliamentary services (regular budget)*

(a) *Parliamentary documentation.* Preparation of scientific, technical and legal analytical reports, studies, reviews and evaluations of the United Nations system and other international and regional space programmes with suggestions for international cooperative actions to improve those programmes, for consideration by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, reports of seminars, training

courses, symposia, conferences and workshops to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

(b) *Substantive services*. Substantive servicing of the annual sessions, including preparation of draft and final reports, of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees, their subsidiary bodies and related meetings of the General Assembly and its Working Group of the Whole on the question of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

2. *Published material (regular budget)*

(a) *Recurrent publications*. Preparation of technical and legal studies on new developments in space technology and their economic and social applications, as mandated by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, for distribution to Member States and international organizations; monthly survey of *Selected Events in the Peaceful Exploration of Outer Space*; *Seminars of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications*; *Highlights in Space*; and updated directories relating to space activities;

(b) *Non-recurrent publications*. Special publications, articles and reviews relating to United Nations space activities;

(c) *Technical material*

(i) Maintenance of a public register and a database of information in accordance with the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space provided to Member States in the A/AC.105/INF and ST/SC/SER.E series of documents. It is expected that the database will be completed in 1996, and would require maintenance and continuous updating;

(ii) Maintenance of a database for and operation of the International Space Information Service (ISIS) for use by Member States and all specialized agencies. It is anticipated that the database for ISIS would be completed in 1997 and would require continuous updating.

3. *Information materials and services (regular budget)*

(a) *Booklets, pamphlets, fact sheets, wall charts, information kits*

(i) Information, reference and other library services upon request to Member States, United Nations offices and other organizations through the specialized Office for Outer Space Affairs Reference Centre providing outer-space-related scientific, technical and legal information;

(ii) Publications, displays and educational materials for distribution at United Nations seminars and workshops;

(iii) National reports and reports of international organizations.

(b) *Exhibits and other visual materials*. Maintenance of a permanent exhibit at the Vienna International Centre on the benefits of space technology for improving life on Earth and for protecting the environment and provision of presentations to Member States and space-related international organizations.

4. *Operational activities (regular budget/extrabudgetary)*

(a) *Advisory services*. Provision of technical advisory services upon request to Member States on satellite communications, remote sensing, basic space science and satellite meteorology and environmental monitoring to support national and regional programmes and projects in such fields;

(b) *Group training, including seminars, workshops and fellowships*

(i) Workshops and meetings of experts each year in various regions of the world for participants from developing countries on selected topics of space science and technology and its applications;

(ii) Training courses for participants from developing countries on selected topics dealing with remote sensing, communications, satellite meteorology and space science;

(iii) Administration of 35 to 40 long-term international fellowships in the field of space science and technology offered by Member States and international space agencies.

5. Coordination, harmonization and liaison (regular budget)

(a) Preparation for and servicing of the annual Inter-agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, which coordinates the space-related activities of the organizations of the United Nations system;

(b) Preparation of the annual report of the Inter-agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

(c) Cooperation with organizations of the United Nations system, national agencies and international space-related governmental and non-governmental organizations in establishing regional centres for space science and technology education;

(d) Cooperation with organizations of the United Nations system, national agencies and international space-related governmental and non-governmental organizations in space activities, which will include organization of conferences and meetings; implementation of projects dealing with the applications of space science and technology; education and information activities; and collection and distribution of literature on space science and technology. It is possible that additional activities might arise during the biennium 1996-1997 on the basis of decisions by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the General Assembly with respect to the holding of a third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

(e) Liaison and representation functions with organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with space activities, including participation in meetings, conferences and symposia organized by those bodies.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

Posts

4.9 The estimated requirements ($3,424,000), which reflect a resource growth of $48,100 owing to the delayed impact of 1994-1995 changes in the Office's staffing table, would cover continued provisions for 19 established posts.

Other staff costs

4.10 Provisions of $12,900 would cover general temporary assistance ($6,200) and overtime ($6,700) requirements during peak workload periods prior to and during the meetings of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees and their subsidiary bodies, as well as activities related to workshops, seminars and training courses organized by the Office. Prior to the relocation of the Office from Headquarters to Vienna, provision was made for these objects under the Department of Political Affairs. They are therefore proposed for redeployment from that Department.

Consultants and experts

4.11 The estimated requirements of $34,300 would provide for the preparation of complex scientific, technical and legal studies that could not otherwise be undertaken within the Office for Outer Space Affairs, as requested by the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees and in implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The studies would cover specialized topics such as remote sensing of the earth, particularly by radar satellites, technical and eventual legal issues associated with space debris and low Earth-orbiting satellites for communications, technical and regulatory issues relating to the geostationary orbit and the use of space technology in sustainable development and in implementation of the recommendations of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development ($22,300).

4.12 Consultancy requirements would also cover the development of training programmes with respect to rapidly advancing technical areas of high potential for economic and social returns for the developing countries of the Programme on Space Applications, which in effect supplement expertise available within the Office and in-kind contributions from Member States and international organizations ($8,000). In

addition, consultant services would be required for the development of the International Space Information Service, particularly the establishment of a capability for on-line database facilities available from a number of regional and national space agencies ($4,000).

Travel

4.13 The estimated requirements of $95,000 would provide for the participation of the Expert on Space Applications and the staff of the Office in the organization and conduct of seminars, training courses and workshops in the implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications; participation in international conferences in the field of space applications; the conduct of technical discussions and negotiations, as well as planning and raising voluntary contributions for future activities of the Programme on Space Applications; technical advisory services, especially in view of some of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; and coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system and with other bodies. Travel will also be undertaken in relation to the establishment of the proposed regional centres for space science and technology education and for attendance at sessions of the General Assembly during consideration of the items relating to the peaceful uses of outer space.

General operating expenses

4.14 During the annual sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies and visits by representatives of space agencies that contribute substantial financial and manpower resources to the work of the Space Applications Programme, hospitality expenditures are incurred. It is proposed therefore to provide for such hospitality requirements in the biennium 1996-1997 in the amount of $3,100.

Supplies and materials

4.15 The provision of $5,100 would cover specialized requirements of the Office, such as digital remote-sensing image processing and geographic information system packages.

Equipment

4.16 The estimated requirements of $30,200 would provide for the acquisition of office automation equipment, including a colour scanner and printer and various types of software ($11,500), and the replacement of office automation equipment (six personal computers and related software) ($18,700). The requirements previously included under the Department of Political Affairs are proposed for redeployment from that Department.

Fellowships, grants, contributions

4.17 The requirements of $446,200 relate to the implementation of the activities of the Space Applications Programme, which include training courses for participants from developing countries and workshops and meetings of experts from various regions of the world.